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DE RUEHNE #3580 1431227
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O 231227Z MAY 06
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4243
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2180
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 5471
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 5486
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 8472
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 6153
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 8536
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 3352
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA 4069
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 3984
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/19/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREF](#) [PHUM](#) [IN](#) [BT](#) [NP](#)
SUBJECT: BHUTANESE REFUGEES ON BACKBURNER BUT NOT
FORGOTTEN, SAYS MEA

Classified By: PolCouns Geoff Pyatt for reasons 1.4 (B,D)

¶1. (C) In light of the turmoil in Nepal, the GOI has not recently discussed the refugee situation with the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGOB), MEA Joint Secretary (North) Pankaj Saran told visiting PDAS Camp and PolCouns in a May 17 meeting. Saran indicated that he would visit Bhutan during the week of May 22-26 and the refugee situation would be on the agenda. Saran reported that other recent meetings with the Bhutanese authorities, the GOI has reiterated that if Thimphu would take back a pilot group of refugees, the international community would be ready to assist in finding a durable solution.

¶2. (C) Separately, RGOB Second Secretary Karma Jurmin Thinley told us May 23 that his government has not been in contact with the new Nepalese government, but Ambassador Tshering (who is accredited to Nepal) plans to visit

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Kathmandu in the "near future." While Tshering is still waiting for clearance from Thimphu and his meeting schedule has not been made, Thinley indicated that the refugee issue would likely be discussed.

¶3. (C) Comment: The change in government and unstable political situation in Nepal has diverted India's attention away from the Bhutanese refugee problem. Saran's promise to raise the issue while in Thimphu is welcome and we will follow up with the MEA when he returns. End Comment.

¶4. (U) PDAS Camp cleared this cable.

¶5. (U) Visit New Delhi's Classified Website:
(<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/sa/newdelhi/>)
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